

Serial No. 10/687,243

PATENT
Docket No. 58085-010202**REMARKS**

Claims 1-19 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claims 20-50 are newly added.

Applicants thank Examiner Hartman for the courtesy of the interview with Applicants' representative, Charles Berman, on April 6, 2005. Applicants further thank Examiner Hartman for guidance in the Advisory Action dated April 27, 2005. The Examiner and Applicants' representative have agreed that the independent claims will be amended to further define what is meant by "hierarchy."

Applicants submit that Claims 20-50 are now condition for allowance.

Formal reconsideration of the rejections set forth in the Office Action dated February 23, 2005 is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1-19 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sim, U.S. Patent No. 6,529,786, in view of Maeda et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,987,420. While Claims 1-19 have been cancelled, claims 20-50 capture similar subject matter as Claims 1-19.

As agreed by the Examiner and Applicants' representative during the interview, "Sim teaches a hierarchy based on time, but does not teach a hierarchy of patrons per se. Maeda et al. briefly discusses 'priority ranking,' but does not discuss in any greater detail what is explicitly meant by this 'priority ranking.'" Accordingly, Applicants submit that Sim in view of Maeda et al. does not render Claims 20-50 obvious. Furthermore, Claims 20-50 include a hierarchy of patrons that is not found in the prior art. Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

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Conclusion

Applicants have complied with all requirements made in the above referenced communication. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. Should matters remain, which the Examiner believes could be resolved in a telephone interview; the Examiner is requested to telephone the Applicants' undersigned agent.

Respectfully submitted,

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